

MEDIA

ISLINGTON CLUBHOUSE

ZINE

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**ARSENAL
HERITAGE
PROJECT
1913 - 2006**

CSV
make a difference

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MediaZINE, dedicated to promoting diversity and encouraging new opportunities in the media industry, provokes intelligent dialogue and provides a democratic forum for discussion within the community. Our driving emphasis is on inspiring creativity and talent; to nurture potential for community interaction; and to engage with other sides of the argument. This is a collation of the best human interest stories, photos, views and analysis of social issues. Produced by the Islington Media Clubhouse that provides affordable media training, mentoring and job assistance into the industry for those excluded through lack of training, or economic and social deprivation, part of registered charity, CSV.

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MEDIA ZINE

www.mediazine.org.uk

editors >> Matt Bray
David McCool
islingtonclub@csv.org.uk

design >> Paula Carvalho
paula@coletivo.org

Printed by dejavucolour

CSV Media Clubhouse
White Lion Centre
43-45 White Lion Street
London N1 9PW
020 7527 7015

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Still images and film frames taken by volunteers on the Arsenal Heritage Project.

Cover Photo courtesy of Tina Evans.

>> SEE OUR CLUBHOUSE CALENDAR FOR 2007 COURSES <<

MOVING ON

A People's Heritage of Arsenal

Arsenal Football Club legend, Bob Wilson, backed the running of the Arsenal Heritage Project dubbed "Moving On >> A People's Heritage of Arsenal". The former goalkeeper envisioned that the project would give Islington residents the opportunity to promote and record the impact that Arsenal Football Club has had on the community.

Bob said, "I feel it is a necessity for the local community to capture the memories of Arsenal. This club has made a huge impact on the local community...the rich history at the club has instilled a need for community spirit and provided strength and unity in Islington".

Thanks to a £39,100 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), local charity CSV Media, in partnership with Finsbury Park Learning Zone and the Arsenal Red Zone, have explored and recorded this unique impact that the club has made on the history of Islington.

Over 100 volunteers have documented the heritage of Arsenal and the surrounding com-

"I feel it is a necessity for the local community to capture the memories of Arsenal... the rich history at the club has instilled a need for community spirit and provided strength and unity in Islington"

munity at a time when the area has undergone significant change with Arsenal FC moving from Highbury to their new Emirates Stadium at Ashburton Grove.

The award was also a cause for celebration for the Heritage Lottery Fund as it marked the 300th such community grant made in London since the Fund was created as one of the Lottery's "good causes" eleven years ago.

To help volunteers record their stories and views of the borough, CSV Media ran a series of free media workshops from their Media Clubhouse in Angel. Freelance professionals offered experienced media training to willing volunteers in

film production, radio production, web design and Photoshop software techniques.

David McCoo, CSV Media Coordinator, said, "The project has been a huge success. We recorded some wonderful stories from elderly residents within the borough. We've heard everything from Irish and Vicars fighting on the North Stand at Highbury to angry Italian hairdressers chasing away their customers with a hatchet!"

These stories and more are to be displayed in the project exhibition towards the end of March. Matt Bray, CSV Media Clubhouse Manager, said, "It's great that the talent and dedication of our Arsenal volunteers is being showcased for all to enjoy".

In addition to the exhibition the volunteer's work will be shown at the Islington Museum in 2008 and subsequently archived. CSV Media would like to thank all the Arsenal volunteers involved on the Moving On project. Their dedication and hard work has made this a very enjoyable and successful project.

WHO WAS ON BOARD:

JOANNA ING

ASPIRATIONS:

To become a radio producer and successful playwright.

BACKGROUND: Before the Arsenal Heritage Project I had just finished university and was unemployed. I have written and produced monologues for an exhibition.

MOTIVATION: I am interested in both radio production and oral history so this was project was perfect for me. Although I was not so interested in football it was great to see how it affects the lives of people in the community.

CURRENT ACTIVITIES: As well as helping with the Arsenal Heritage Project I am working part time answering the phones for a radio station. I am also producing a play by a new Canadian playwright which will be on at the Red Lion in June.

COMMENT: It was useful to practice interviewing and editing techniques. I enjoyed collecting memories not only for preservation but also in the knowledge that others would be able to enjoy the interviews in the exhibition.

FRANCINE PARRY

BACKGROUND: Before working on the Arsenal project I made my own radio show on a CSV Media - Connexions radio course.

MOTIVATION: Having interviewed the like of Natty B from Choice FM gave me the confidence to be involved on the Arsenal Project. Well that and being an Arsenal Fan myself!

CURRENT ACTIVITIES: I am now at The College of NW London, doing an access to Media production and communication course.

ASPIRATIONS:

To become a radio presenter/ film maker.

PAUL JAMESON

ASPIRATIONS:

To pass on skills learned on the CSV courses to other people. I currently work in Camden as a Library Manager and help teaching new learners.

MOTIVATION: The course showed me how to plan a project, use a camera, transfer to the computer, edit the film, and add other images. I also learned how to make it look professional and be watchable, (I.E. what to leave in, cover up or delete).

CURRENT ACTIVITIES: Finishing the filming project for future presentation. Guiding teenagers at a Youth Centre in Camden to use a Video camera and put together a short video piece. I'm also filming a gym class at the Youth Centre to help the tutor gain a certificate.

COMMENT: I have thoroughly enjoyed the Arsenal Heritage Project. It was great to be involved in an historical document. From the first day of the video course I was made to feel welcome. All students mixed well together. Lena Lau our tutor showed us the different processes involved in filmmaking. It at first appeared daunting, however, she guided us gently through the first steps. Everything was hands on. We took it in turns to be camera operator, guider, interviewer and interviewee. Very quickly, things slotted into place. We prepared questions for local people and celebrities to get their views of Highbury and the surrounding area(s). Cut away shots (pieces of film to lay over shots of people speaking to

make it look more interesting) were taken i.e shots of the stadium, local streets, pubs and shops. The editing of the pieces is very rewarding but a very long process that demands concentration and thought. Although we had a rough idea at the outset of what we were going to put together, it was not until we started filming and viewing back that we could see how we were progressing. If a similar project/course is offered I would highly recommend future students to attend. I also look forward to attending a more advanced course at CSV in the future. I would like to thank all the CSV staff who were very helpful and welcoming, in particular thanks go to my fellow students and most of all Lena.

HIGHBURY MEMORIES

MY GRANDDAD TOOK ME TO HIGHBURY FOR THE FIRST TIME ON 26TH NOVEMBER 1955. How do I know? Because I still have the tickets, they cost 5 shillings in the unreserved seats in the East Stand and the opponents were Burnley. Both my Mum and my Dad had been taken to the Arsenal in the early 1920's; they met on an away train in 1938 and had their first date on the North Bank a week later. They eventually married later in the year.

DURING THE WAR THEIR FLAT WAS BOMB DAMAGED SO THEY MOVED TO HARROW. I arrived a couple of years later after the war and my earliest memories of match day Saturdays were all the same. Train to Euston, bus to Chapel Market, pie and mash in Man-zies, then my Nan would take me off to my Aunt's whilst my Mum, Dad and Granddad went off to the Arsenal.

ON THAT PARTICULAR SATURDAY IN NOVEMBER 1955 THE ROUTINE CHANGED AS MY GRANDPARENTS WERE TAKING ME TO THE JEWELLERS NEAR HIGHBURY CORNER TO BUY ME A RING FOR MY CHRISTMAS PRESENT. When we got the ring and came out I expected to get on the bus with my Nan and my Granddad would go off to football. He just grabbed my hand and said, "You're coming with me". We walked through Highbury Park and as we neared the ground the crowds grew. I kept saying to him, "We're going to the Arsenal, aren't we Granddad?" He said, "You just wait and see."

WHEN WE GOT TO THE TOP OF AVENELL ROAD AND I LOOKED DOWN THE HILL, I JUST FROZE. My Granddad told me later he thought I was going to be ill. I had never seen such a crowd before. As we walked down into it, the jostling, the good humoured bantering the peanut seller shouting, the smell of wet woollen coats and cigarettes, I was mesmerised and just loved it.

TO THE VERY LAST DAY AT HIGHBURY I MADE MY HUSBAND WALK UP TO HIGHBURY HILL, ALONG AND THEN DOWN AVENELL ROAD. This was just so I got stand at the top and look down at the crowd. I always loved that and incidentally I still wear the ring, now on my little finger.

I CAN'T REMEMBER MUCH ABOUT THE FIRST GAME AND ONLY FOUND OUT A FEW YEARS AGO WE LOST 1-0. I have now completed fifty years of going to Highbury. It was like my other home; a constant in my life as I grew up, got married and had two children. The Arsenal involved all our family, now into the fifth generation, long may it continue.

by Tina Evans

C/O BERNHARD BARONS
CONVALESCENT HOME
QUEENS PARK
BRIGHTON

1937

DEAR DAD

Thanks ever so much for both of your letters you've no idea how something concerning football cheers me up. I hope Tom told you all about me running around after the Arsenal Team. At last I saw them on the station as they were leaving on Saturday morning. Alex James put the tin hat on it and asked me to kiss him, it ended with me going in their apartment in the train, kissing and wishing each one of them good luck.

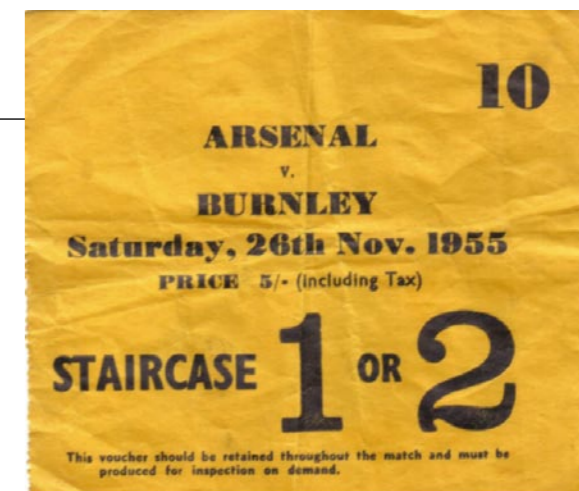
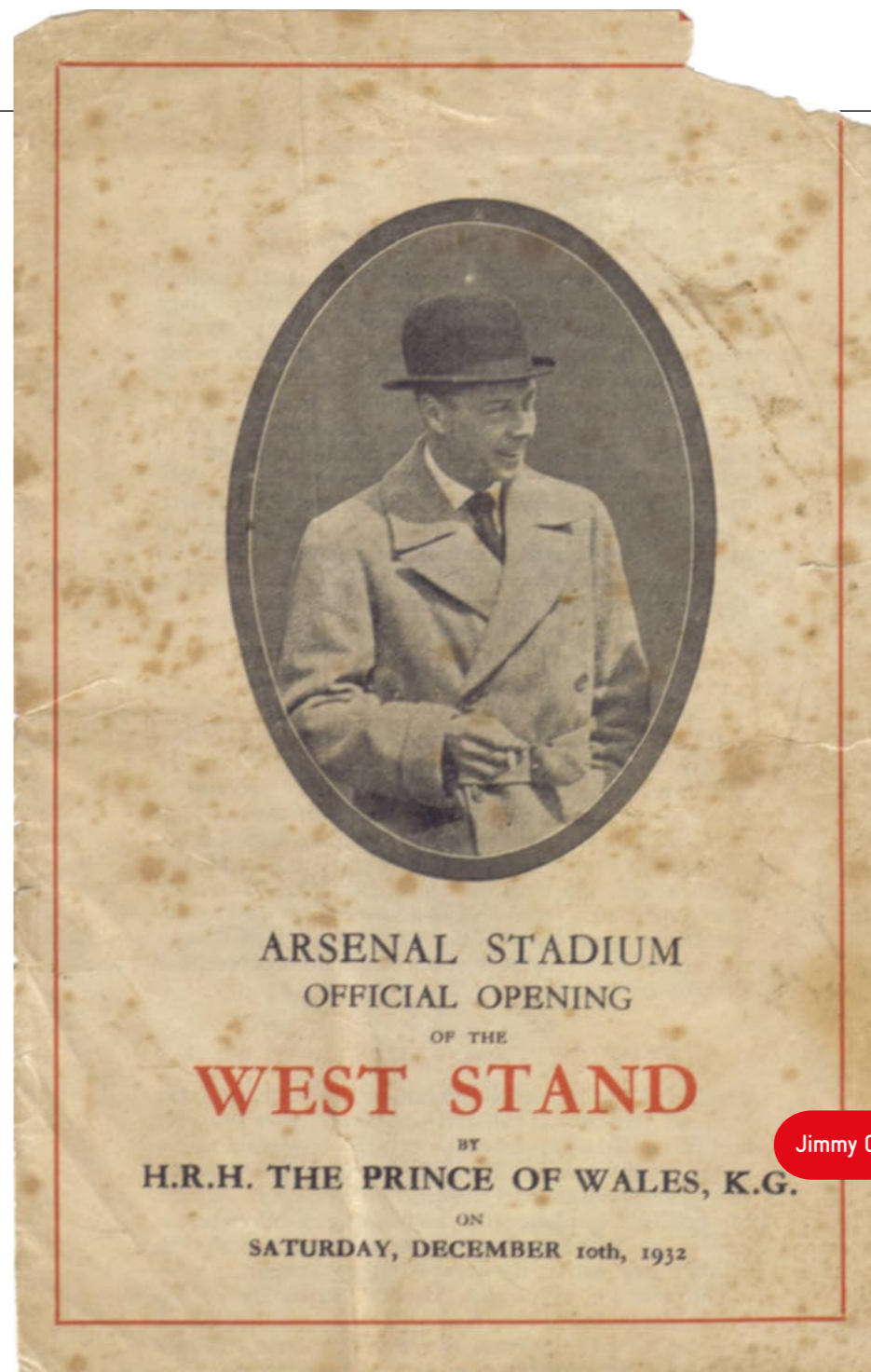
G Allison was very interested in my welfare – wished me a lot better. Male was ever so jolly with me, said he had often wished to see me in civilian clothes for once instead of the old red and white. His wishes for my recovery in time for the semi-final were quite sincere. Copping also nearly squeezed my hand to death. Eddie Hapgood promised me that they would win, if it was only for me, you can bet that I felt proud. Allison said the boys would be thinking of me while they were playing and he practically promised me two Cup Final Tickets.

All that I daresay was just talk but even so it cheered me up a lot and when I saw the result I kidded myself that they had won for me. No harm in that. Anyway I have written a letter of congratulations to them all – I feel like a close friend now.

I have read practically every report that I can. Thanks a lot for your papers, all the girls are quite thrilled about the whole affair and I have to sit and tell them of some of the games I have seen.

Well Dad I think that this is quite enough about our team. I hope Eric and Ronnie are still terrors and I hope they have not quite forgotten me. Tell Mum I hope she does not feel any older and give her my love. I daresay Tom has shown you that snap, you can see what lovely weather we are having although it is a very depressing place. Well Dad I must close now but write a lot more about football. My love to Mum, Eric and everyone.

Your loving daughter,
Rosie



Jimmy Clayton & Rose Brinkman cheering on the gunners in the 1930's

Tina Evans, Islington resident and life-long Arsenal fan contacted us in the early stages of the Heritage Project and kindly shared her memories with us.

The cover photo of this magazine was donated to the project by Tina and shows a group of Arsenal fans including her mother Rose (see letter to left) and her father. The tailored red and white outfits which they are wearing were made by Rose's father and garnered much attention in the footballing press of the day.

Having met at Highbury, Tina's parents later married and passed on their love of the club to their daughter.

ANDOVER ESTATE V ANNE WIDDECOMBE

WHEN A TV CREW FILMED THE ANDOVER ESTATE FOR TREVOR MCDONALD'S 'TONIGHT' PROGRAMME, STARING ANN WIDDECOMBE, A STARTLING INSIGHT WAS SHOWN OF WHAT LIFE IS LIKE ON A COUNCIL ESTATE IN THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY
BY EBI ELDRIDGE

A community under siege from its own children. Foul-mouthed hoodies, teenage drug users and frightened pensioners were the order of the day.

Yet when I visited the estate, I was confronted by residents eager to show me the Andover estate the media didn't want to show on TV.

Arriving on the estate shortly after ten in the morning I was directed by a friendly young woman with two children, to the now infamous 'Central Square'. The stage where pitch battles are apparently fought and where dangerous dogs fight at the command of their young owners.

In reality, Central Square is a small green fenced area surrounded by three nurseries, a community centre, a local grocer's and of course the residents' homes.

I spent an hour trying to locate the places

shown on the programme. Alas, I could not find the block with the vandalised security door where a gang of obnoxious youths smoked weed and blocked entry for its residents. Nor could I find the football pitch. Allegedly these scenes were actually filmed on other estates in Islington. As for vicious dogs, the only dogs I saw were in the fenced area of the Square playing rather quietly.

Owner of the dogs Linda Atkinson, aged fifty, has lived on the estate for over a decade. I sat with her, alongside family and friends outside her front door on Falconer Walk and listened as she told me of the residents' outrage at the ITV portrayal.

The Andover Estate for all its architectural design faults is a community. It's a community where people pass each other with a friendly smile and exchange pleasantries. Neighbour knows neighbour and

are on hand to help each other out.

Linda and other residents have organised a petition with over six hundred signatures collected so far, in protest against the misrepresentation of their lives. They claim that the programme chose not to promote anything positive despite being presented with such opportunities. "Ann Widdecombe really put us down. She said she wanted to talk about the money to improve the estate but it was all about the hoodies".

Jean McGuire aged sixty-nine, a resident of Ray Walk, has lived on the estate for over seventeen years. A lover of classical music her tastes have been broadened by the young people on the estate. While her dogs exercise inside the fenced area of an evening, she and her young friends chat and listen to hip hop. In disbelief she told me "The blood on the floor (that was shown on TV) was paint!"

Despite Arsenal FC having a presence on the estate, their work received no attention from the ITV filmmakers. The newly refurbished five a side football pitch and play area are dedicated to Sue Davis a former resident of the Andover estate who is dearly missed by those who knew her.

Through the Positive Futures programme, football sessions are run by Arsenal coaches, four days a week for young people between the ages of eight and nineteen. Dean Miller, one of the coaches, affectionately known as 'Deano', is well respected by the children and adults alike. Speaking about the growth and development of his football students he told me, "It's been phenomenal...This is one of our largest projects going in terms of participation".

"ANNE WIDDECOMBE REALLY PUT US DOWN. SHE SAID SHE WANTED TO TALK ABOUT THE MONEY TO IMPROVE THE ESTATE, BUT IT WAS ALL ABOUT THE HOODIES"

In the evening of my visit, a community meeting was held for residents to discuss the programme and to plan a response to the negative publicity. Well attended by both adults and young people, by youth workers and Neighbourhood police officers, the assembled residents expressed their anger and hurt at the portrayal. The documentary residents claimed 'was a lie', and 'a load of rubbish' which 'undermine(s) all the work that has been done on the estate. Amongst many of the positive solutions that

came out of the meeting, was an offer from Michelle Golden, an independent filmmaker, to work with young people on the estate. Through training in film production it is hoped the Andover estate will make a fitting response to the 'Tonight' programme, while gaining some valuable skills in the process.

This community is ready to challenge the negative perceptions attached to the place they call home. The Andover estate is in the process of regeneration, both inside and out. As the young people on this estate grow into productive members of our society let's not label them as antisocial. Let's support the daily efforts of the residents in maintaining a decent environment for their families and loved ones. Let's highlight what is good on the Andover Estate. Let's give the resident's a chance.



SECOND-CLASS CITIZENS

BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK

I EVENTUALLY FOUND MY FLOCK

When WW2 ended countless British families moved out of Islington to the 'better classed' suburbs on the outskirts of London. Many of the new suburbanites had recently returned from fighting in the name of 'Queen and Country', only to be met by a high rate of unemployment and cramped housing conditions. In Islington, nearly sixty percent of the community was living in tenements or multi-occupancy houses, the highest percentage in London during the period.

Together with changes in employment and housing conditions, another marked difference was a dramatic change in the social and racial make up of the borough.

Newly arrived Jewish immigrants from Germany, Poland and Russia had fled their homelands due to religious and political persecution. Turkish Cypriots, Cypriot Greeks, West Indians, Africans and Asians came to the borough and formed their own communities within the established and sometimes hostile Anglo community.

Lifelong residents of Islington Bill and Jean Carter recall some of their memories as though it was yesterday. I asked Jean how she felt when new immigrants settled into the borough.

'Me and my other classmates were astonished when the first black girl attended our school at St Mary Magdalene. I'm not sure of the year but I was really young then.'

Asked, if the young girl was treated differently due to her color Jean told me, **'I didn't treat her any different to any of my other classmates, even though she was frowned upon by some. It was all new to us then. You see, I had a first hand experience of discrimination. I was born out of wedlock, people frowned upon me too, so I knew not to discriminate against others, it wasn't a nice feeling to put someone through.'**

Bill turns his attention to the working life familiar to many in the early post war years. **'I remember the good old days, I was 14 years old. I'd hear the hooter sound-**

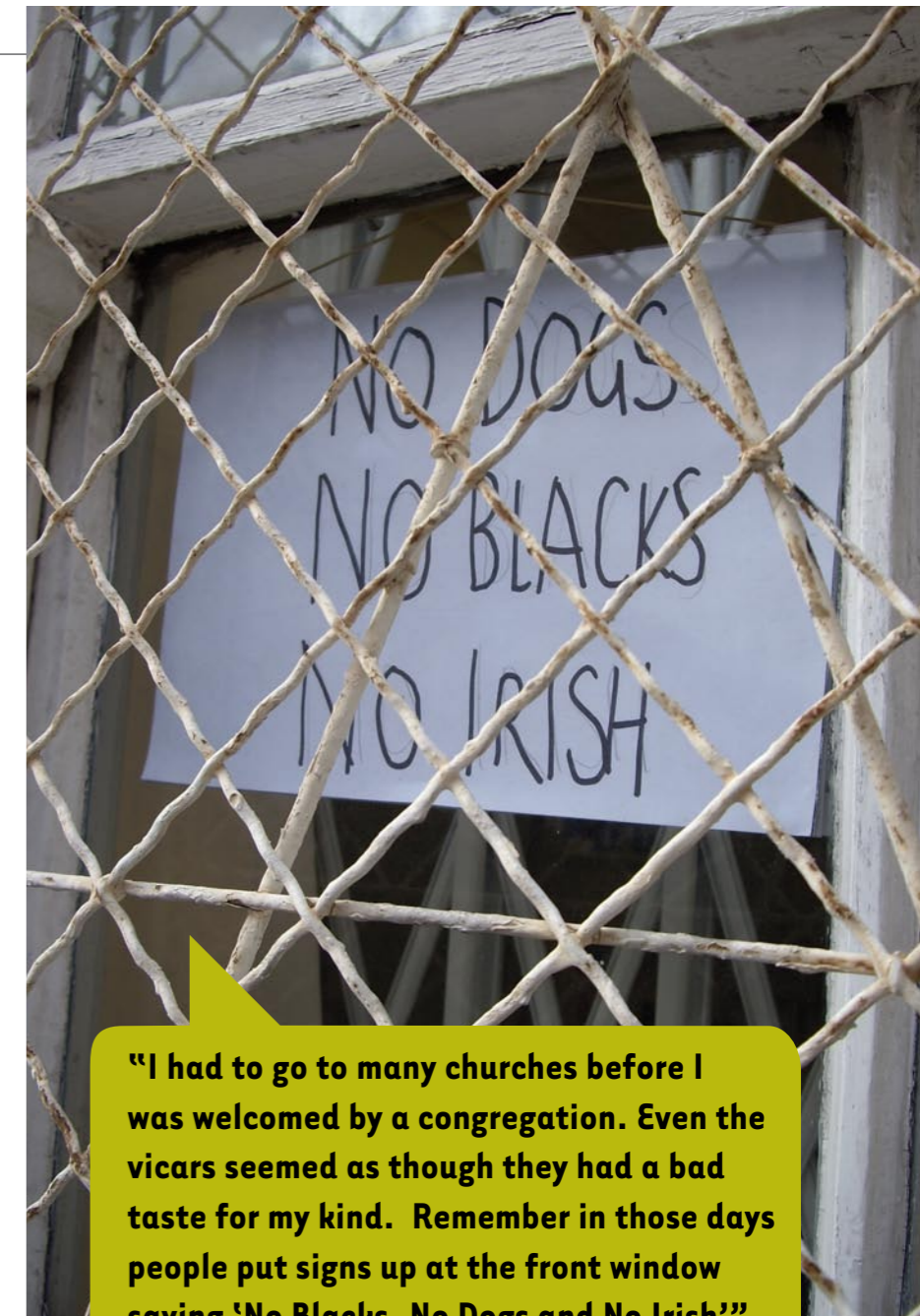
ing off at 7:55am for all employees to attend work at the old factories on Holloway road, then at 1:00pm for lunch and again at the end of our working day. There were no labor laws then so we'd have to work seven days, fifty hours a week and at the end of every week I'd bring home seventeen shillings and six pence.'

In pre-WW2 Britain, nearly every factory in the Islington area employed an all Anglo-British work force. As years passed after the war, the factory workforce reflected immigration patterns and many nationalities found themselves working alongside each other.

When Nigerian born immigrant Richard Akinodoie came to Islington in 1962, the average rent was twenty-five pounds per week and people were still using outdoor lavatories. The ethnic make up of the neighborhood was already set as a multicultural, yet racial tension was endemic both in the workplace and in the community at large. Six years later Enoch Powell was to give his infamous 'Rivers of Blood' speech. Attacking levels of immigration, he claimed Britain was **'busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre'**. He continued, **'In this country in fifteen or twenty years time, the black man will have the whip hand over the white man'**. In reaction the Tory leader Edward Heath ruled Powell out of the Shadow Cabinet. **'I have told Mr Powell that I consider the speech he made...yesterday to be racist in tone, and liable to exacerbate racial tensions'**.

Clearly the positive contribution of immigrant groups to Islington was essential for the growth of the borough, making it what it is today. Without foreign labor the bulk of people living in Islington (and other areas of London) might still be living in slum-like conditions.

I asked Richard if he had experienced any racism or bigotry from within the community. **'When I first got here I and my wife were seeking a place to worship. I had to go to many churches before I was welcomed by a congregation. Even the vicars seemed as though they had a bad taste for my kind. Remember in those days people put signs up at the front window saying 'No Blacks, No Dogs and No Irish'.** Gradually things changed though. **'I (eventually) found my flock...at St Mary Magdalene church. They accepted me with open arms. I've been there for over 30 years now.'**



"I had to go to many churches before I was welcomed by a congregation. Even the vicars seemed as though they had a bad taste for my kind. Remember in those days people put signs up at the front window saying 'No Blacks, No Dogs and No Irish'"

Trevor brown arrived in Highbury from Trinidad in 1956. He was part of the Recruitment scheme the British Government mounted for labourers from its colonies. His intention, like countless others at that time, was to gain employment and send money back home to maintain his family, and then return to his sovereign land. As often in life, things didn't go as planned and in 1965 he sent for his family, only returning to Trinidad for vacation 20 years later.

He told me when he came here most of London looked as though a bomb had struck it. 'It was not how I'd imagined it at all, it was cold, damp and the Brits didn't want us here, no way. I never intended on staying here. They thought we were second-class citizens. They also thought all we wanted was their women and their jobs. That wasn't true at all. We were invited here by the British Empire, little did we know it was to clean up after the war'.

by Talaat Qureshi

DOING THE WALK

TALAAAT QURESHI TAKES YOU ON THE ARSENAL REGENERATION WALK WITH ISLINGTON RESIDENTS SUE FORMSTON AND KRYSS KATSIAVRIADES



THE ANGEL

HISTORY >> London's deepest tube station, The Angel is named after an inn which stood nearby. A local landmark, it has been mentioned in many novels over the centuries, including Dickens' *Oliver Twist* and Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*.

COMMENT >> "ISLINGTON HAS CHANGED SO MUCH FROM THE SIXTIES" Sue tells us. Pointing across to a once grand building, she continues "I USED TO GO TO THE PICTURES THERE." You can still see the once gleaming columns of **Angel Picture Theatre**; now black with soot and grime "IT OPENED AS THE MOST LUXURIOUS CINEMA IN 1913" offered Sue. Now functions as a Starbucks coffee house.

Our Arsenal walk had begun. We explored Camden Passage with its myriad of new and old shops ending up at the newly regenerated N1 Shopping Centre.

SEE & DO >> **N1 Shopping Centre** which has the Angel Wings sculpture at its heart, **Camden Passage**. **Chapel Street Market >>** Traditional street market open Tuesdays to Sundays.

ISLINGTON GREEN

HISTORY >> Standing at its centre is a statue of Sir Hugh Myddleton, a Welshman who was four times Mayor of London. He was the architect of the New River which brought water from Hertfordshire to Islington and the rest of London.

Opposite the Green, and occupying a Grade II listed building, is the contemporary **Business Design Centre**. This modern exhibition site (opened 1986) was formerly known as the Royal Agricultural Hall or "Aggie". The Aggie was derelict for many years but is now one of the largest and most sophisticated centres of its kind. When the new building opened it was so popular that the old Angel station with its single island platform and rickety lifts had to be rebuilt to safely handle the increase in passenger numbers.

SEE & DO >> Take in a film at the **Screen on the Green Cinema**, eat your summer lunch on the green.



ISLINGTON SQUARES

HISTORY >> Islington is famous for its many Georgian squares... Canonbury Square was home to Eric Blair, novelist, essayist and critic. During World War II he was correspondent for the BBC and *The Observer* newspaper. He is rather better remembered as George Orwell. Anthony Charles Lynton Blair, was the other famous Islingtonian living near Barnsbury Square before he took up residence at the better known Number 10 in 1997.

HOUSING >> The council is the largest single Islington landlord, with 43,500 privately-owned homes and around 11,000 housing association homes.

COMMENT >> "I FEEL VERY STRONGLY THAT THE SHORTAGE OF HOUSING FOR RENT, IS THE BIGGEST PROBLEM... WHILST I WELCOME THE LARGE AMOUNTS OF CAPITAL MONIES THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALLOCATED TO ISLINGTON, I STILL WANT MORE, AND I CONTINUE TO LOBBY THE GOVERNMENT ABOUT THIS." Jeremy Corbyn, MP for Islington North.

UPPER STREET

HISTORY >> Kryss worked in one of the first Vegetarian restaurants to open in 1970, the Wholemeal. It was owned by Chris Farlowe, a sixties rock and pop singer, and Willy Wolf, a journalist on the *Daily Mirror*.

SEE & DO >> Home to a number of local theatres, including the **King's Head pub** (which still uses a pre-decimal cash till) and the **Almeida**, as well as numerous bars and restaurants.



HIGHBURY CORNER AND THE PLEASURE FIELDS

FAMOUS RESIDENTS >> **Marie Stopes**, pioneer in birth control, and **Edward Lear**, writer, artist and author of nonsense verse *The Owl* and the *Pussy-Cat*. A rather infamous resident was American born **Dr Crippen**, who murdered his wife in Edwardian London. Crippen was subsequently hung for his crime in Pentonville, in 1910.

EMIRATES STADIUM Weaving out of Highbury Fields, we descend towards the magnificent new Emirates Stadium at Ashburton Grove. Newlon Housing Trust is developing over a thousand new houses as part of the wider regeneration of the area arising from Arsenal's move.

COMMENT >> "I AM PLEASED TO SEE THAT THIS MAJOR REGENERATION PROJECT IS DELIVERING SUCH A HIGH VOLUME OF AFFORDABLE HOMES FOR LONDON'S KEY WORKERS...IT SHOWS HOW SPORT CAN SUCCESSFULLY DRIVE REGENERATION IN OUR COMMUNITIES." Ken Livingstone

THE ARSENAL WALK

Housing and Regeneration
Time: 2 hours
Distance: approx 2.5km
Start: Angel Tube Station
Finish: Arsenal Tube Station
Tip: Start Early and stay the whole day.

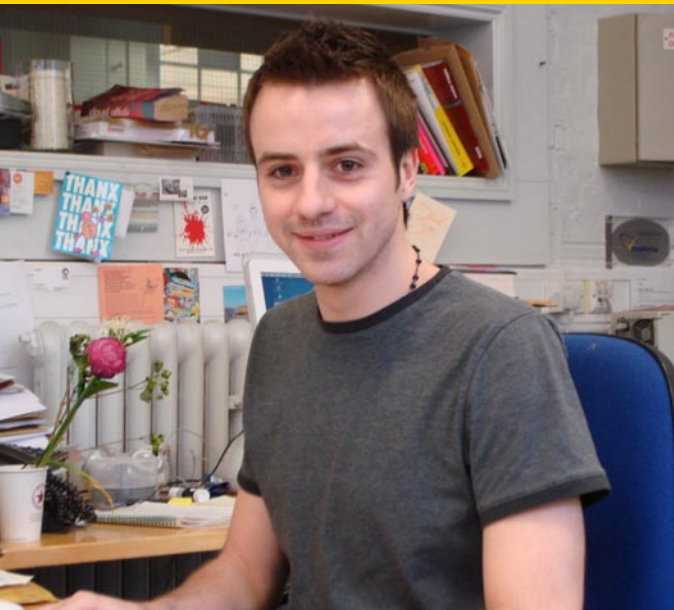


HIGHBURY STADIUM

The old Highbury Stadium is only a short walk away from Emirates and is surrounded by terraced houses.

HISTORY >> Woolwich Arsenal moved here in 1913. Herbert Chapman, their great manager later dropped Woolwich from their name so that they would always be first in any League listing. Highbury stadium was rebuilt in art-deco style in the 1930s. During World War II (1939 – 1945) football stopped and the stadium was requisitioned as an Air Raid Precautions (ARP) station. On 21 May, 1966 the heavily publicized world Heavyweight title between Henry Cooper and Muhammed Ali took place at Highbury stadium. One minute and 38 seconds into the sixth round the referee stopped the fight. Cooper, a deep gash over his left eye was forced to concede victory to 24-year-old Ali. Highbury...the history is endless, take the walk and enjoy for yourselves.





Mr. McCoo

INTERVIEWED BY MONIQUE GRANT

This month's employee profile is on CSV's own lucky charm, 26-year-old Arsenal Heritage Project Coordinator David McCoo. The latest addition to the CSV Media team, David is highly enthused and dedicated to doing his civic duty without boundaries. He devoted his time and energy volunteering at CSV Environment whilst a student in Bristol, before making a dash overseas to Nigeria to lend a hand in the ongoing fight against the spread of HIV/aids.

You've been an employee at CSV for a few months now, but what exactly is your job role?

The reason I was brought in was as the Arsenal Heritage Project Coordinator. I oversee all aspects, everything from running the courses to liaising with the freelance tutor's, making sure we meet all deadlines and also liaising with the Arsenal Heritage Fund, making sure all targets are met. It gets a bit tricky sometimes.

You've worked on the Arsenal Heritage Project, but are you an Arsenal fan?

Unfortunately no! I'm a life long Liverpool fan, always have been, always will be. It seems to me that everyone who comes to CSV clubhouse claims to be an Arsenal fan and every time we get stuffed by Arsenal they seem to come out of the woodwork to make my life hell.

What made you want to work for a charity based organization such as CSV Media?

Interestingly enough I volunteered with CSV in my student days. I worked in CSV Environment for about three months. I absolutely loved it. The atmosphere was so relaxed it didn't seem like work at all. That's a sign of a good job!

How long have you lived in London?

I've lived in London for about 6 months. I'm originally from Northern Ireland as you might have heard from my lovely accent. I moved here just after returning from Nigeria in 2006. I haven't been back in Ireland for, well it seems like millennia.

What was it that took you to the continent of Africa?

I volunteered with VSO at Nigeria; I helped with HIV/aids organizations and NGO's in a region called "Cross River State". I worked in a clinic for postnatal mothers. What we'd do is refer expecting mothers to find out their HIV status and if they came up positive it was most likely the unborn child was too, but once we knew their status we could do something for them instead of ignoring the situation.

So what are your views on the Hollywood celebs going to Africa to adopt?

I think it all depends on the celebs real reasons for doing it in the first place. It's hard to find the justification for taking a child from its home country and sometimes even its biological parents and take it somewhere which is so alien to that baby. I won't name names but I'm a bit dubious and sceptical especially when some celebs have such a hectic schedule they haven't even seen their husband for three years. When would they have time to look after the child?

What advice would you give to young adults who are starting their career who don't know the value of volunteering?

I was never inclined to volunteer, myself, it's only later in life when I went to apply for jobs and start my career, that I realized employers looked for you to be proactive in your community life. If you haven't really thought of volunteering you can rest assured that someone else has, and they're the likely candidate to get the job. So from a selfish point of view it is really good for your own career to volunteer, plus the benefits the community gets out of your services is just immense.

Except for the financial gain what is it that inspires you to come to work everyday?

When you sit down and have a chat with the students past and present, you can see the growth from each individual day to day; you see what they can achieve in such a short period of time, plus the difference it makes to their lives. Truly that's what gives me greatest pleasure and inspiration to come to work and give my all. It's all worth it at the end of the day.

ARSENAL AND MAIMONIDES

Double Club, Playing for Success, Arsenal Soccer Schools and Arsenal and Maimonides are some examples of the projects that Arsenal FC have been developing for the past years to get a more tolerant, open-minded and fair society inside and outside the United Kingdom. Arsenal, with Alan Sefton at the head of the community programme thinks that **"if the glamour and charisma of football in general and Arsenal in particular encourage children to learn, we're doing well"**.

Amongst all these projects, Arsenal and Maimonides gets our attention because of its contemporary relevance. This scheme, which

was started by the Maimonides Foundation, promotes dialogue and understanding between Jewish and Muslim communities. It runs every summer and brings together primary school children from both religions to play football in mixed teams.

Parents are also encouraged to watch the matches to promote relationships between communities. Besides the football matches, children discuss different topics including islamophobia and anti-Semitism under supervision of teachers and parents.

Because of the proven the success of the project in London, the project has been

extended to other problematic areas such Israel, South Africa or eastern Ukraine. In these cases, an exchange of books is added to offer the young football players the opportunity of reading about other non-violent cultures.

Maimonides, one of the greatest philosophers in the Medieval Age and who this programme against racism is named after said **"The same is the case with those opinions of man to which he has been accustomed from his youth; he likes them, defends them and shuns the opposite views."** So, let's make our children understand a wide range of views and we will have a better future.

ISLINGTON 2007

photographed by Roberto Garagarza



MAKING MEDIA // ADULTS 18+ //

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